Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

God is ringing the bells of deep empathy that we may arise to the courage of social transformation! Yes, the children weep and some have even lost their lives. Families are shattered as parents fall on their knees at the sight of empty bedrooms and pictures of their little ones.

We have come through the valley of “death” at least once as we opened our hearts to grace and gave our lives to Jesus. Now the valley of death stands before us in a new way, calling us to draw ourselves, our communities, and our society through this bristling terrain. A new birth awaits us, just as we await the birth of Jesus this Advent. Let us slowly, with trembling and with awe, on our knees move towards the Christ child and lift the weeping children toward this Love.

We know in our heart, this Love, is the Nonviolent Love of Friends and Enemies. We know that we have been called to care for the suffering and to become friends with those in need, on the margins of our society, the lonely teens, the mentally ill, the broken families, etc.

We also know the power of symbols through our rituals to shape our imagination and our habits about how we engage conflict. The guns in our society---within our homes, in our movies, in our video games, at our sporting events, in our churches, endorsed by chaplains, in our language, in our ongoing wars, in our massive Pentagon spending, in our nuclear arsenal, in our drones, etc.—function to shape our imagination about how to engage conflict. This is “cultural violence.” We’ve seen how this cultural violence cultivates the habits of gun violence over and over again in our society.

Brothers and Sisters, the parents are on their knees in despair, the children are weeping, Jesus has come weeping again, because Jerusalem still does not know the way of peace. As Jesus said to the disciples who mistakenly thought he wanted them to arm themselves with lethal weapons, “Enough of this!” We sense the transforming energy of Grace stirring us to stop the gun violence, to lay down our arms, and to call our society and government to change our laws.

We invite you to sign this petition to let the President know of your support for changing our laws. With LCWR, we also draw your attention to a nation-wide effort to remember the 20 children and six adults killed in Newtown. Motherhouses, monasteries, churches, and town halls are being asked to ring their bells on December 28, the feast of the Holy Innocents, at noon (EST) and pause for a moment of silence to pray for all the families who have lost loved ones. Perhaps your communities and the parishes where you minister would like to join in this effort.

God rings: Who shall we become?

In God’s Grace,

CMSM

*For an illuminating article on the 2nd Amendment, click here.